

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 08275 261116Z
ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 SSO-00
INRE-00 /022 W

-----124451 261119Z /10

O 261018Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1823

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 8275

E.O. 11652: XGDS-3, DIMPTD
TAGS: PINR, IN
SUBJECT: BIODATA ON MEMBERS OF PRIME MINISTER'S ENTOURAGE

REF: STATE 133807

1. HERewith THE BIO INFORMATION REQUESTED REFTel.
2. Y.V. TONPE. TONPE IS A SOFT-SPOKEN, THOROUGHLY PLEASANT AND DECENT MAN, TOTALLY LOYAL AND DEVOTED TO THE PRIME MINISTER. A MAHARASHTRIAN AND LAW GRADUATE, HE LOOKS YOUNGER THAN HIS 70 YEARS. TONPE HAS NEVER MARRIED, AND HAS LITTLE IF ANY PERSONAL OR PUBLIC LIFE OUTSIDE HIS ROLE AS DESAI'S SPECIAL PRIVATE SECRETARY (E.G. HE MAKES IT A RULE NOT TO ACCEPT SOCIAL INVITATIONS WHICH DO NOT INVOLVE THE PM). HE ACTS AS A MAN FRIDAY TO THE PM, PERFORMING A WIDE VARIETY OF OFFICIAL AND PERSONAL CHORES FOR DESAI, AND IN HIS UNASSUMING AND QUIET WAY CAN INVARIABLY BE FOUND HOVERING IN THE BACKGROUND ON THE PM'S TRAVELS. HE WATCHES CLOSELY OVER THE PM'S INTERESTS AND IS NOT AFRAID TO VETO THINGS THAT MIGHT BE QUESTIONABLE. WE DOUBT HE PLAYS ANY ROLE IN MAJOR POLICY DECISIONS OR HAS ANY ASPIRATIONS IN THAT DIRECTION.

3. TONPE OPERATES QUIETLY AND EFFECTIVELY, RARELY THROWING HIS WEIGHT AROUND: WIDESPREAD AWARENESS OF
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HIS CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH DESAI MAKES THIS UNNECESSARY IN ANY EVENT. EMBASSY OFFICERS WHO HAVE DEALT WITH HIM OVER THE YEARS THROUGH GOOD TIMES AND BAD (THESE DEPENDING ENTIRELY ON THE TURN OF MORARJI'S POLITICAL FORTUNES) HAVE FOUND HIM FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL, AND HAVE ENJOYED HIS QUIET SENSE OF HUMOR. HIS LAST VISIT TO WASHINGTON WAS IN 1968, WHEN HE ACCOMPANIED DESAI,

THEN DEPUTY PM, ON AN OFFICIAL VISIT. HE IS AN ABSTEMIOUS VEGETARIAN.

4. H(ESHMUKH) S. SHAH. SHAH, 43, HOLDS AN MA DEGREE AND JOINT GOVERNMENT SERVICE IN THE SIXTIES. HIS CONNECTION WITH DESAI, REPORTEDLY DATING BACK TO 1964, IS SAID TO HAVE RESULTED IN HIS FORCED RESIGNATION FROM THE INDIAN ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICE IN 1969 WHEN DESAI WAS OUSTED FROM THE CABINET. HE HAD BEEN PRIVATE SECRETARY TO DESAI WHEN DESAI WAS DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER/FINANCE MINISTER 1967-69. SHAH IS A CAPABLE CONFIDANT AND TRUSTED ADVISER OF THE PM. DESAI BROUGHT HIM INTO HIS OFFICE WHEN THE NEW GOVERNMENT WAS FORMED LAST YEAR.

5. KRISHNANAATH PANDURANG MEDHEKAR, 50 RECEIVED AN LLB DEGREE FROM BOMBAY UNIVERSITY IN 1947. HE PRACTICED LAW FOR ONE YEAR, THEN JOINED THE INDIAN POLICE SERVICE A COUPLE OF YEARS LATER. HIS FATHER WAS A SUCCESSFUL BARRISTER. HE HELD A VARIETY OF POLICE POSITIONS IN WESTERN INDIA, RISING TO BECOME DEPUTY COMMISSIONER OF POLICE IN BOMBAY. HE HAS BEEN ON DEPUTATION TO THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA SINCE 1958 AND IS PRESENTLY JOINT DIRECTOR FOR SECURITY IN THE INTELLIGENCE BUREAU (IB) WHICH MAKES HIM THE SECOND RANKING OFFICE IN THE BUREAU. HIS OFFICE IS RESPONSIBLE FOR GOVERN-
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MENT SECURITY, FOREIGN EMBASSY PHYSICAL PROTECTION, VIP PROTECTION, COORDINATION OF INDUSTRIAL PROTECTION, AND COUNTER-TERRORISM.

6. MEDHEKAR HAS WIDE-RANGING INTERESTS IN LAW, POLITICS, THEATER, ART, AND INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC. HE IS MARRIED AND WE UNDERSTAND HIS WIFE IS ACCOMPANYING HIM TO THEUS. BOTH ARE NON-VEGETARIANS
WIFE
GOHEEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRIME MINISTER, BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION, MINISTERIAL VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978NEWDE08275
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X3 DIMPTD
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780222-0996
Format: TEL
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780514/aaaaalpi.tel
Line Count: 103
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9ed8b695-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION INR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 133807
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 30 aug 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2550432
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BIODATA ON MEMBERS OF PRIME MINISTER'S ENTOURAGE
TAGS: PINR, OVIP, IN, (DESAI, MORARJI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9ed8b695-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014